



Yellowstone Master Gardeners  
P.O. Box 35021  
Billings, MT 59107

**Our yearly holiday party will be in the main building at Zoo Montana at 6 PM, Wed. December 5, 2012.** We are planning a **potluck** dinner along with an optional gift exchange. If you want to receive a gift, please bring one to exchange—\$10.00 maximum. If your last name begins with:



⇒ **A thru G** Dessert  
⇒ **H thru R** Main Dish  
⇒ **S thru Z** Salad  
Utensils, plates, napkins and drinks will be furnished by the Association.

**2013 Master Gardener classes** start in February. Registration for the first level must be received by Amy Grandpre by January 18th. Please visit the Yellowstone Master Gardener website for further class information.

The Master Gardener Newsletter will be published 6 times a year in 2013.



# YELLOWSTONE MASTER GARDENER NEWSLETTER



Volume I Issue II

December 2012

## Master Gardener Marion Grummett

*By Bob Wicks*

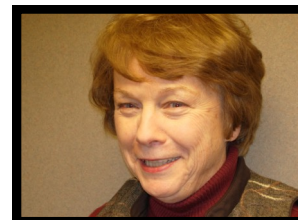
Marion Grummett has been a member since 2011. Since joining, Marion has successfully completed all 3 levels of the Master Gardener program..

Marion loves the educational aspects of the program and also loves talking to people about gardening. She is always willing to share her knowledge about gardening, but is also always looking to learn new gardening methods to try out as well.

Marion originally received a business degree and worked as a bank secretary. She then took time off to raise two sons. When her sons got older, Marion returned to school and received an additional degree at MSU-Billings in the mental health field. Marion has worked in this field for 17 years, 16 of them at the Mental Health Center in Billings.

Marion is a very active member of the Master Gardeners program. She is involved in the Yellowstone Valley Farmers Market, Riverstone Health Farmer's Mar-

ket, Special K, and the Zoo gardens. She also belongs to the Thumbs R Green garden club. Marion serves on the Board of the Yellowstone County Master Gardeners Association and is co-chair of the Association's community garden committee.



Marion has gardened in Columbus, British Columbia and Billings. One of her passions is landscape design. Marion's other hobbies are sewing, reading, music and travel. Marion also volunteers with Grief Share at her church.

Her tip of the month is to work hard but have fun doing it. Her goal in life is to help people any way she can whether in her work, her personal life or with gardening. Thank you, Marion, for all you do and for your influence and participation in the Master Gardeners program!

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## Anthurium



I took the plunge to try a completely new plant a year ago, when I purchased an *Anthurium* plant from Gainan's. The striking waxy red flowers and large deep-green leaves have remained healthy and constant all year round. I took the care advice that Gainan's includes and kept the soil moist and placed the plant in a somewhat shaded window, fertilizing about once a month (less water and little fertilizer in the winter months). I occasionally wipe the leaves with a damp cloth.

I have been pleased with how easy it has been to maintain this beautiful houseplant. I can comfortably recommend that you try this sturdy and gorgeous plant in your own home. This month its red and green colors fit right in with the season!

Submitted by Ann Guthals



### MASTER GARDENER PHOTO GALLERY

This beautiful shot of an American Goldfinch atop a sunflower was taken by Master Gardener Corry Mordeaux in his garden last summer.

If you have a beautiful or unusual photo of your garden, please submit your photo(s) to Amy Grandpre at [agrandpre@co.yellowstone.mt.gov](mailto:agrandpre@co.yellowstone.mt.gov).

## DECEMBER TIPS

### Vegetable Gardens

Check stored veggies; if not storing well, use immediately.

A blanket of straw or other mulch keeps garden soil warmer and brings worms closer to the upper soil.

Use indoor winter days to update garden notebook.

Have fun reading seed catalogs and planning next year's garden.

### Houseplants

Cut back fertilization to once a month; do not over water.

Water poinsettias when soil is dry; grow in bright window.

## Pumpkin Pudding

### Ingredients:

2 cups cottage cheese  
2 cups cooked well-drained pumpkin or other winter squash  
4 eggs  
½ cup sugar (or less)  
1/8 tsp. salt  
Nutmeg

Blend cottage cheese, pumpkin, eggs, sugar and salt in the blender. Pour into small greased Pyrex glass baking cups till about 2/3 full. Set cups in baking dish and fill baking dish about halfway up cups with hot water. Sprinkle tops of custard with nutmeg, if desired.

Bake at 350 degrees until custard is set—about 45 minutes to an hour.

*Adapted From NY Times Natural Foods Cookbook*



**CALENDAR**

Dec. 1st—Class at Gainan's by MG Sharon Wetsch on making swags & wreathes

Dec. 5th—MG Holiday Party (see

page 1 for info)

Dec. 8th—11:30 am—Moss Mansion holiday tree tour (\$5)—email Bob

Wicks at [bobwix@hotmail.com](mailto:bobwix@hotmail.com) to reserve a spot

## Yellowstone County Master Gardeners Association News

Over a year ago, a group of interested Master Gardeners began meeting to look for grants to help the MG program remain financially stable. After much consideration, a nonprofit association was formed to support the ongoing Master Gardener program by looking for grants and by enhancing the educational opportunities, service activities, and social connections for Master Gardeners beyond classes. The Yellowstone County Master Gardeners Association was born.

Current YCMGA Board members are Bob Wicks, Murray Lyda, Sharon Wetsch, Corry Mordeaux, Marion Grummett, Ann Guthals, Vikki Fosjord, Merita Murdock, and JoAnn Glasser.

We have achieved nonprofit status from the State of Montana and have submitted application for federal nonprofit designation. When we receive the federal designation, a search for grants will begin in earnest. We hope to fund the Farmer's Market display, provide scholarships for classes, help with class costs, and determine other good uses for grant funds. Master Gardeners in good standing may become members of the YCMGA. (Contact Sharon Wetsch at [sharonwetsch@yahoo.com](mailto:sharonwetsch@yahoo.com) for further info on membership.)

### **American Grown: The Story of the White House Kitchen Garden and Gardens Across America** by Michelle Obama

First Lady Michelle Obama recounts her journey to establish a garden on the south lawn of the White House. Many children's groups and volunteers from all different backgrounds, ages and walks of life have become involved in the cultivation of the White House Garden. Ms. Obama tells about the many ways gardens cultivate people as well as plants. She also talks about the impact gardening has on our lives and the future of our nation. "Gardens can be used not just to nourish our children's bodies but to nourish their minds and shape their habits and preferences." Through gardening, children learn where their food comes from and a desire to try healthier food choices. From reading this book, I was able to clearly see and understand the overall picture of how gardening intertwines with the First Lady's quest to address childhood obesity.

The First Lady is an advocate for children's gardens in our schools and communities. The book gives many good ideas and resources for developing children's gardens. It also has stories of Farmers Markets, Community Gardens, and other successful and interesting gardening projects across the United States. Furthermore, the book has tips from the Executive Chef on preparing simple and nutritious recipes with fresh produce from the garden.

This book was published in 2012 and is available for checkout at the Parmly Billings Library.

*Book Review by Elaine Allard*







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**Montana State University Extension - Yard and Garden:**  
<http://gardenguide.montana.edu>

Send your submissions for newsletter to [ymastergardener@gmail.com](mailto:ymastergardener@gmail.com) by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month for submission in following month's edition

#### Editors:

- ♦ Ann Guthals
- ♦ Bob Wicks
- ♦ Elaine Allard
- ♦ Marcella Manuel
- ♦ Sharon Wetsch
- ♦ Sheri Kisch
- ♦ Tracy L. Livingston

## The Disappearing Bees: The Canary in the Mine

### By Sheri Kisch

I have kept honeybees since 1982. Never before, in 28 years, have I lost a hive. Last year I suffered my first loss due to very prolonged periods of cold when bees can't move; the bees starved in place with 90 lbs of honey on top.

I started over this year with one hive, which I was able to split since it was doing so well. Then the slow decline began. Dead bees out in front of both hives. Some bees were just fluttering helplessly in the grass because, of all things, deformed wing virus. I had only read about this virus, never had seen it. By the time the hive population had dwindled to half, I sent a sample in for diagnosis. The results: deformed wing virus, Kashmir bee virus, Israeli bee virus, and sacbrood! There is no cure for viruses.

Something happened to my bees' food supply to have caused such a dramatic change. All factors have been the same for years and mite levels were not that high. Scientists have not figured out the definitive causes of chronic wasting disease and disappearing bees. They do know that varroa mites may spread viruses, there is not as much nutritious bee forage available, and what forage there is, is probably contaminated.

There have been many studies done to prove or disprove the fact that pesticides and chemicals are killing our pollinators. (Pollinators are bees (who pollinate 1/3 of your food supply), birds, bats, and butterflies.) Scientists say that a certain amount (parts per billion) of toxic chemicals like pesticides can't do that much harm, but when a diet contains ppb of pesticides in almost everything, it adds up, resulting in a weakened immune system.

For further reading try Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* again. You can also subscribe to an ezeine at Catch the Buzz, <http://www.beeculture.com> for the latest in studies or reports on bees. One very interesting article was on corn seed treatment found at <http://home.ezeine.com/1636/1636-2012.01.04.21.46.archive.html>. You can also check out other archived topics at Catch the Buzz.

Enjoy your fruits, nuts and vegetables while you can.



### Current Volunteer Opportunities:\*

Ext. Office Phone, etc.  
Metra Sq. Ft. Garden  
Farmers Market Info. Booth  
C.A.R.E. After School Program  
Special K Ranch  
Courthouse Planter  
Salvation Army/Vista  
Fair Judge  
Home on the Range Garden  
Moss Mansion  
Zoo MT/Geranium Fest  
New Visions/Passages  
Annual Flower Show  
Meadowlark House  
Women's Prison Garden  
Friendship House  
St. Andrew's Com. Garden

\*Please contact Amy Grandpre to see who is the current contact for these projects.  
[agrandpre@co.yellowstone.mt.gov](mailto:agrandpre@co.yellowstone.mt.gov)  
Or call her at: 406.256.2821

### Happy Birthday!

Pam Before 12/1  
Daniel Wyrwas 12/5  
Rick Shortwell 12/5  
Elisa Murnion 12/10  
Ann Guthals 12/11  
JoAnne Roach 12/11  
Molly Harrington 12/24  
Lael Berner 12/26

### For Sale or Trade

*This space is available for members use.*

**Wanted**  
Save your 4" round (or square) plastic pots for After School Program - Mary McLane. (669-3329)